

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed on October 20, 2005. Claims 26 to 35 stand withdrawn. Claims 1, 16, and 21 have been amended. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments. A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith. No fee is due in connection with this Response. However, if a fee is due please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for any insufficiency of payment.

The Office Action rejected Claims 2, 5, and 7 to 10 under 35 U.S.C. 112 for not having sufficient antecedent basis for the terms "the second component" and "the first component." Applicants disagree with this rejection because Claims 2, 5, and 7 to 10 depend from independent Claim 1 which provides proper antecedent basis for the terms "the first component" and "the second component." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that correction of Claims 2, 5, and 7 to 10 is not required and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 16, and 21 to replace the term "changed" with the term "changeable." Applicants have amended these claims for clarity and not to distinguish these claims over the prior art.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1 to 6 and 9 to 25 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0054873 to Peterson ("Peterson"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,851,148 to Brune et al. ("Brune"), in further view of U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0027638 to Schneider et al. ("Schnieder"). The Office Action rejected Claims 7 and 8 over Peterson, in view of Brune, in view of Schnieder, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873 to Moody ("Moody"). Applicants respectfully disagree with and traverse these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

The Office Action uses Peterson as the primary reference in the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection. However, 35 U.S.C. 103(c) precludes the use of Peterson because:

[e]ffective November 29, 1999, subject matter which was prior art under former 35 U.S.C. 103 via 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is now disqualified as prior art against the claimed invention if that subject matter and the claimed invention "were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person." This change to 35 U.S.C. 103(c) applies to all utility, design and plant patent applications filed on or

after November 29, 1999, including continuing applications filed under 37 CFR 1.53(b), continued prosecution application filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d), and reissues. (MPEP 706.02(I)(1)).

Applicants respectfully submit that Peterson is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) because, at the time that the present invention was made, the subject matter of Peterson and the present invention were owned by or subject to an obligation of assignment to IGT. Peterson is assigned to IGT, a Nevada corporation. The present application is also assigned to IGT. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Peterson is disqualified as prior art to the present application under 35 U.S.C. 103(c). Enclosed herewith are a copy of the Notice of Recordation and the recorded assignment to IGT for the present application.

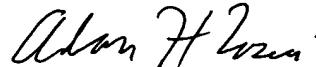
For the reasons discussed above, the Office Action cannot rely on Peterson as the primary reference in the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Peterson, Brune, and Schneider fails as a proper basis for the obviousness rejections of Claims 1 to 6 and 9 to 25. For similar reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Peterson, Brune, Schneider, and Moody fails as a proper basis for the obviousness rejections of Claims 7 and 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are improper and should be withdrawn.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY



Adam H. Masia
Reg. No. 35,602
Customer No.: 29159

Dated: January 6, 2006